

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SREF, BG, IN, PK

SUBJECT: RESETTLEMENT IN PAKISTAN OF SOUTH ASIAN REPATRIATES

REFS: A) STATE 113832; B) ISLAMABAD 4328

SUMMARY. GOVERNMENT RENEWS REQUEST FOR HELP IN
RESETTLING REPATRIATES FROM BANBLADESH IN AIDE MEMOIRE
AND MEETING WITH EMBASSIES. END SUMMARY.

1. SECRETARY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS DIVISION AFTAB AHMED KHAN
INVITED EACH EMBASSY AMBASSADOR TO ATTEND MEETING JULY 24
FOR PURPOSE DELIVERING AIDE MEMOIRE AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS
ON A RENEWED REQUEST FOR HELP IN REHABILITATION OF HOMELESS
REPATRIATES FROM BANGLADESH AND INDIA. THE GOVT PUT THE COST
OF RESETTLEMENT AT BETWEEN \$14.5 MILLION AND \$20 MILLION, THE
LATTER FIGURE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT RAPID INFLATION IN PAKISTAN
ECONOMY.

2. AHMED EMPHASIZED GOVT STRATEGY TO GET THESE REPATRIATES
OUT OF PAKISTAN GOVT CAMPS AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE. HE
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INSISTED THAT IT WOULD BE THE GREATEST OF FOLLY FOR THE GOVT

TO ALLOW THE REPATRIATES TO BECOME A PERMANENT DRAIN ON BUDGET.

3. AHMED EMPHASIZED THAT PAKISTAN SITUATION VERY DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF BANGLADESH SINCE RETURNEES FROM PAKISTAN WERE GOING HOME AND WERE GENERALLY ABLE TO FIND FAMILIAR EMPLOYMENT, WHILE REPATRIATES FROM BANGLADESH HAD NEVER LIVED IN PAKISTAN AND WERE ARRIVING WITHOUT RESOURCES OR FAMILY CONTACTS. HE SAID THAT OF THE 40,000 HARDSHIP CASES, 35,700 HAVE ALREADY ARRIVED AND ANOTHER 5,000 ARE EXPECTED. THE GOVT ESTIMATES THESE CONSTITUTE 8,000 FAMILIES. THE GOVT ESTIMATES THAT THE 35,700 ARE LOCATED IN PROVINCES AS FOLLOWS: PUBJAB 26,000; NWFP 5,200; SIND 4,500.

4. FUNDS ARE NEEDED FOR HOUSING, FOR THE CREATION OF JOBS OR VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND FOR SUBSISTENCE DURING THE HOPEFULLY SHORT PERIOD BEFORE FULL INTEGRATION INTO THE SOCIETY CAN BE ACHIEVED. THE GOVT WANTS TO AVOID KEEPING ANYBODY IN A CAMP MORE THAN SLHBMONTHS.

5. IN THE AIDE MEMOIRE THE ONLY CONTRIBUTION LISTED AS SO FAR RECEIVED WAS FROM HOLLAND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$110,000; HOWEVER THE GOVT ACKNOWLEDGED CONTINUING RECEIPT OF FOOD THROUGH WFP AND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM IRAN \$53,000 AND UAE (\$10,000 PRIVATE). IN ADDITION WE UNDERSTAND CANADA HAS CONTRIBUTED \$250,000 THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS ALTHOUGH THE PRECISE USE OF THESE FUNDS HAS NOT YET BEEN DETERMINED.

6. COMMENT: THE NEW ELEMENT IN GOVT'S PRESENTATION WAS THE VERY STRONG EMPHASIS ON INTEGRATING REPATRIATES QUICKLY INTO SOCIETY WITH STRESS THAT FUNDS WOULD BE USED PRIMARILY FOR THIS PURPOSE. WE DETECT VERY LITTLE ENTHUSIASM FOR THIS PROGRAM AMONG OTHER EMBASSIES. WE GUESS THAT GOP MAY HAVE MADE THIS PRESENTATION AS A BASIS FOR SEEKING FUNDS FROM OIL PRODUCERS. WE ANTICIPATE THAT AIDE MEHNARE MAY ALSO BE SUBMITTED TO GOVTS THROUGH EMBASSIES. COPY BEING POUCHED TO CONSTABLE OF STATE AND MCCLOSKEY OF AID.
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